

b6
b7C

WFO 161-4100

PAGE TWO

ENDEAVOR TO LOCATE AND INTERVIEW [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] CHICAGO, IN THIRTYFIVE.

ALL OFFICES CONDUCT APPROPRIATE CHECKS ON NEW NAMES.

BUREAU ADVISED.

SPIN. - P -

TELETYPE UNIT
FEB 16 1967
ENCODED MESSAGE

Mr. Tolson.....
Mr. DeLoach.....
Mr. Mohr.....
Mr. Wick.....
Mr. Casper.....
Mr. Callahan.....
Mr. Conrad.....
Mr. Felt.....
Mr. Gale.....
Mr. Rosen.....
Mr. Sullivan.....
Mr. Tavel.....
Mr. Trotter.....
Tele. Room.....
Miss Holmes.....
Miss Gandy.....

FBI NEW YORK /8/
237 PM URGENT 2-16-67 JLW
TO DIRECTOR
FROM NEW YORK 161-2271 1P

KATHERINE DUNHAM AKA KAY DUNN, KATHERINE PRATT, MRS. JOHN THOMAS PRATT,
KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT, KATHERINE DUNHAM MC COO, MRS. JARDIS MC COO;
SPI, BUDED PAST.

b6
b7c

CREDIT BUREAU, BSS AND POLICE AGENCY CHECKS, NYC, NEGATIVE FOR
KATHERINE DUNHAM MC COO, MRS. JARDIS MC COO AND KATHERINE DUNHAM
PRATT. NEW YORK REPORT FOLLOWS. P.
END

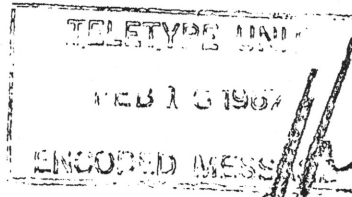
ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/1/00 BY SP-4/2/00

MLT FBI WASH D C

NOT RECORDED

25 MAR 13 1967

1cc destroyed
2/1/67
61 MAR 27 1967



Mr. Tolson _____
Mr. DeLoach _____
Mr. Mohr _____
Mr. Wick _____
Mr. Casper _____
Mr. Callahan _____
Mr. Conrad _____
Mr. Felt _____
Mr. Gale _____
Mr. Rosen _____
Mr. Sullivan _____
Mr. Tavel _____
Mr. Trotter _____
Tele. Room _____
Miss Holmes _____
Miss Gandy _____

7-01PM DEFERRED 2-16-67 MS

TO DIRECTOR

FROM SAN FRANCISCO (161-1078) 1 P

KATHERINE DUNHAM, AKA, SPI, BUDED PAST

RE WASH FIELD TEL FEBRUARY FIFTEEN LAST.

NO CREDIT OR POLICE RECORD FOR APPOINTEE UNDER
ADDITIONAL NAMES, AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANTS LISTED IN SAN
FRANCISCO REPORT JANUARY THREE ONE LAST HAVE NO RECORD UNDER
ADDITIONAL NAMES.

NO REPORT BEING SUBMITTED. RUC.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/00 BY [signature]

END

QCC3

MSE

FBI WASH JXC

3/21 destroyed
61 MAR 27 1967

161-4870-23
NOT RECORDED
25 MAR 13 1967

b6
b7C

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

REPORTING OFFICE LOS ANGELES	OFFICE OF ORIGIN BUREAU	DATE 2/16/67	INVESTIGATIVE PERIOD 2/15 - 2/16/67
TITLE OF CASE KATHERINE DUNHAM aka Kay Dun, Katherine Pratt, Mrs. John Thomas Pratt, Katherine Dunham Pratt, Katherine Dunham Mc Coo, Mrs. Jardis Mc Coo		REPORT MADE BY [redacted] (grj)	TYPED BY grj
		CHARACTER OF CASE SPI	

b6
b7CREFERENCE: Washington Field teletype to Chicago, 2/15/67.

- RUC -

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/00 BY SP-4 BJA/Hog- A* -
COVER PAGECase has been: Pending over one year ☐ Yes ☐ No; Pending prosecution over six months ☐ Yes ☐ No

APPROVED <i>[Signature]</i>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACES BELOW
COPIES MADE: 1 - Bureau (AIR MAIL) 1 - Los Angeles (161-1132)		161-4870-29
		NOT RECORDED FEB 17 1967
Dissemination Record of Attached Report		Notations
Agency		<i>[Signature]</i> Spec. Inv.
Request Recd.		
Date Fwd.		
How Fwd.		
By		

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Copy to:

Report of:

Date:

February 16, 1967

Office: Los Angeles, California

Field Office File #:

161-1132

Bureau File #:

Title:

KATHERINE DUNHAM

b6
b7C

Character:

SPECIAL INQUIRY

Synopsis:

No credit or arrest record located at Los Angeles, California, identifiable with the appointee, KATHERINE DUNHAM, under the names of KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT, KATHERINE DUNHAM MC COO, and Mrs. JARDIS MC COO.

- RUC -

DETAILS:ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/00 BY SP4BPA/legCREDIT AND ARREST

On February 16, 1967, the files of the following agencies as caused to be checked contained no credit or arrest record identifiable with the appointee, KATHERINE DUNHAM, under the names of KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT, KATHERINE DUNHAM MC COO, and Mrs. JARDIS MC COO:

Retail Merchants Credit Association
Los Angeles, California
Checked by IC [redacted]

Los Angeles Sheriff's Office and
Los Angeles Police Department
Los Angeles, California
Checked by IC [redacted]

- 1* -

F B I

Date: February 17, 1967

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via A I R T E L _____
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI
FROM: SAC, BALTIMORE (161-2309) (RUC)
SUBJECT: KATHERYN DUNHAM
aka
Buded Past
SPI

Re Baltimore teletype dated 2/1/67 and WFO
teletype 2/15/67.

Additional names of the appointee, mentioned in
re WFO teletype were checked through DCII on February 16,
1967 without locating any record in addition to that
set forth in re Baltimore teletype.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/00 BY SP4bjk/eg

① - Bureau
1 - Baltimore
JHB:kj
(2)

161-4870-31
NOT RECORDED
FEB 18 1967

301

Approved: *EPA*
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

F B I

Date: 2/17/67

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via AIRTEL REGULAR MAIL
(Priority)

TO DIRECTOR, FBI
FROM SAC, PHILADELPHIA (161-1066)(RUC)
RE KATHERINE DUNHAM, aka
SPI

Re WFO tel Philadelphia 2/15/67.

Files Philadelphia Division contain nothing identifiable
additional names appointee set out in retel.

In view fact neither appointee nor husbands ever
known to reside Philadelphia territory, no additional checks
being made here UACB.

1 - Bureau
E - Philadelphia
JJM
)2(

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/00 BY SP-4bjl/leg

161-4870-38

NOT RECORDED

14 FEB 20 1967

301
61 MAR 27 1967Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

REPORTING OFFICE SEATTLE	OFFICE OF ORIGIN BUREAU	DATE 2/17/67	INVESTIGATIVE PERIOD 2/16/67
TITLE OF CASE KATHERINE DUNHAM, aka Katherine Pratt, Mrs. John Thomas Pratt, Katherine Dunham Pratt, Katherine Dunham Mc Coe, Mrs. Jardis Mc Coe		REPORT MADE BY <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100px;"></div>	TYPED BY jb
		CHARACTER OF CASE SPECIAL INQUIRY b6 b7C	

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

REFERENCE: Seattle report of SA 2/1/67;
WFO teletype to Seattle, 2/15/67.

- RUC -

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/00 BY SP4Bj/Hog

- A* -
COVER PAGE

Case has been: Pending over one year ☒ Yes ☐ No Pending prosecution over six months ☐ Yes ☐ No

APPROVED

SPECIAL AGENT
IN CHARGE

DO NOT WRITE IN SPACES BELOW

COPIES MADE:

1 - Bureau**1 - Seattle (161-328)****161-4870-32****4 FEB 20 1967**Dissemination Record of Attached Report

Notations

Agency			
Request Recd.	361		
Date Fwd.	51 MAR 27 1967		
How Fwd.			
By			

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Copy to:

Report of:

Date:

February 17, 1967

Office: Seattle, Washington

Field Office File #:

161-328

Bureau File #:

Title:

KATHERINE DUNHAM

Character:

SPECIAL INQUIRY

b6
b7C

Synopsis:

Credit and arrest check at Seattle, Washington,
negative on additional names of appointee.

- RUC -

DETAILS:

Credit and arrest checks at Seattle, Washington,
were conducted by Investigative Clerk [redacted]

CREDIT AND ARREST

On February 16, 1967, the names, KATHERINE DUNHAM
PRATT, KATHERINE DUNHAM MC COO, AND MRS. JARDIS MC COO, were
searched, with negative results, at the following agencies:

Seattle Police Department, Seattle, Washington;

King County Sheriff's Office, Seattle, Washington; and,

The Seattle Credit Bureau, Seattle, Washington.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/1/00 BY SP-4 bja/Hcg

- 1* -

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

REPORTING OFFICE NEW YORK	OFFICE OF ORIGIN BUREAU	DATE 2/17/67	INVESTIGATIVE PERIOD 2/16 - 17/67
TITLE OF CASE KATHERINE DUNHAM aka Mrs. John Thomas Pratt Kay Dunn, Katherine Pratt, Katherine Dunham Pratt, Katherine Dunham McCoo, Mrs. Jardis McCoo		REPORT MADE BY <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 20px;"></div>	TYPED BY vby
		CHARACTER OF CASE SPI b6 b7C	

REFERENCES:

NYrep of SA dated 2/14/67.
WFO teletype to Chicago dated 2/15/67.
NY teletype to Bureau dated 2/16/67.

- RUC -

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/1/00 BY SP4 bja/tog

Case has been: Pending over one year ☐ Yes ☐ No; Pending prosecution over six months ☐ Yes ☐ No

APPROVED

SPECIAL AGENT
IN CHARGE

DO NOT WRITE IN SPACES BELOW

COPIES MADE:

① - Bureau (RM) -

1 - New York (161-2271)

161-4870-33

NOT RECORDED

9 FEB 20 1967

Dissemination Record of Attached Report

Notations

Agency				
Request Recd.				
Date Fwd.	61 MAR 27 1967			
How Fwd.				
By				

- A* -
COVER PAGE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

b6
b7C

Copy to:

Report of:

Date:

2/17/67

Office: New York, New York

Field Office File #:

161-2271

Bureau File #:

Title:

KATHERINE DUNHAM

Character:

SPECIAL INQUIRY

Synopsis:

No credit, arrest or BSS.

- RUC -

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/00 BY SP-4 gnt/eg

NY 161-2271

b6
b7C
b7D

DETAILS:

Credit

On February 16, 1967, [redacted]
Credit Bureau of Greater New York, advised IC [redacted]
[redacted] that she could locate no record identifiable with the
names KATHERINE DUNHAM MC COO, Mrs. JARDIS MC COO or
KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT.

Arrest

On February 16, 1967, SA [redacted] caused
the records of the New York City Police Department (NYCPD)
to be checked by [redacted] Bureau
of Criminal Identification: [redacted] Information
Unit; [redacted] Old Record Room (all of the
above of the NYCPD); and [redacted] Fingerprint
Bureau, Criminal Court of the City of New York. No record
was located for KATHERINE DUNHAM MC COO, Mrs. JARDIS MC COO
or KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT.

Miscellaneous

On February 16, 1967, [redacted]
Bureau of Special Services, NYCPD, advised SA [redacted]
[redacted] that he could locate no information concerning
KATHERINE DUNHAM MC COO, Mrs. JARDIS MC COO or KATHERINE
DUNHAM PRATT.

1 - Mr. Gale
1 - Mr. Cleveland
1 - Mr. Burke

February 17, 1967

BY LIAISON

Photo

CC TO:	CSC-NFA
REQ. REC'D	2-2
FEB 19 1977	
ANS.	
BY:	LAK/LMC

Photo Conc

CC TO:	Hew
REQ. REC'D	3/27/75
JUN 16 1975	
ANS.	
BY:	WST/John

Honorable Marvin Watson
Special Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Watson:

In accordance with a request received from Mrs. Mildred Stegall on January 23, 1967, an investigation has been conducted regarding Miss Katherine Dunham. Transmitted herewith is a summary memorandum containing the results of this investigation.

The check of the records of three governmental agencies* has not been completed. When the results of these checks have been received, you will be advised.

ch

The investigation of Miss Dunham covered inquiries in the continental United States and Mexico as to her character, loyalty, general standing, and ability but no inquiries were made as to the sources of her income.

The Acting Attorney General has not been provided a copy of this communication.

Sincerely yours,

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/00 BY 8046/Htg

Delivered to Mildred Stegall
on 2/17/67

REC 22

761-482034

Enclosure

* IRS, Passport Office, and Security, Department of State

WHB:cam cam
(5)

SEE NOTE PAGE 2

25 MAR 13 1967

Tolson _____
DeLoach _____
Mohr _____
Wick _____
Casper _____
Callahan _____
Conrad _____
Felt _____
Gale _____
Rosen _____
Sullivan _____
Tavel _____
Trotter _____
Tele. Room _____
Holmes _____
Gandy _____

MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

Return to Mr. Burke, Room 1254.

RECEIVED-GALE

RECEIVED-DIRECTOR
F.B.I.

Photo of Mary
CC TO: *State*
REQ. REC'D *9-14-74*
OCT 2 1974
ANS. BY: *DeLoach*

FEB 17 3 17 PM '67
FEB 17 9 45 AM '67
REC'D DE LOACH
FBI

FEB 17 9 21 AM '67
FEB 17 3 30 PM '67

REC'D DE LOACH
FBI

b6
b7C

Encl. Photo
TO: *JRS (NYC)*
11-19-70
NOV 28 1970
BY: *WRS* *TS*

RECEIVED-DIRECTOR
F.B.I.
MAR 2 9 56 AM '67

(daughter)

34
MAR 2 1967
FBI

Honorable Marvin Watson

NOTE: Request received 1/23/67 from White House. Position involved not indicated. Miss Dunham, aged 57, is a well-known Negro dancer and choreographer. She is highly regarded in the theatrical field. During 1940s and 1950s she and her troupe participated in programs which were sponsored by communist front organizations but apparently without her knowledge according to informants. She is not known to have at any time been interested in communism according to informants. She was highly recommended for a position of trust by those interviewed.

~~KATHERINE DUNHAM~~ ~~NEED~~ ~~WRAH-SUMMARY~~
Mrs

REC'D-READING ROOM

FEB 16 11 05 AM '67

b6
b7C

Katherine Dunham ~~X~~ McCoo
Mrs. Tardis ~~X~~ McCoo

Miss Dunham was born in Chicago, Illinois, on either June 22, 1909, or June 22, 1910. Various records reviewed during investigation lists her date and place of birth as indicated above. No record concerning her birth could be located in the Department of Health for the State of Illinois, it being noted that the State of Illinois did not require the filing of birth records until 1915.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/00 BY SP-4/bjz

She enrolled at the University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, in January, 1929. She was granted a Bachelor of Physical Culture degree in August, 1936.

During 1935 and 1936, Miss Dunham was a student in anthropology at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

Miss Dunham has been a dancer, dance director, and choreographer her entire adult life. While attending Northwestern University (1935 and 1936) she became interested in primitive dances and during 1936 and 1937 she was the recipient of a Julius Rosenwald Foundation Fellowship which enabled her to study native dance, ritual, and folklore in the islands of the Caribbean Sea and Brazil, South America. Thereafter she traveled to New York City where she appeared in several

MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

161-4870-34
ENCLOSURE
Return to Mr. Burke, Room 1254.

Return to Mr. Burke, Room 1254.

Katherine Dunham

b6
b7C
b7D

Broadway productions. She also appeared in several motion pictures. In 1941 Miss Dunham formed a dance troupe which has since performed throughout the United States, Mexico, and other countries of the world. Miss Dunham and her troupe are presently touring in Africa. Since 1944 she has been the owner of a dance school in New York City. It was initially known as Katherine Dunham School of Arts, Incorporated, and it is now known as the Dunham School.

From September, 1964, until June, 1965, she was a visiting instructor (supervising ballets and operas) at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois. She is now or she has been a member of several professional organizations and she is the author of two books and several articles which concern herself and the dancing profession.

Marital Status

In July, 1941, Miss Dunham married [redacted]. Their address is 440 West 42nd Street, New York City. They also have a temporary residence at 167 West 85th Street, New York City. In addition, they have a home in Port-au-Prince, Haiti; however, they have not used this residence in recent years as a result of existing economic and political conditions in Haiti.

II. RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION

Interviews

Jacob K. Javits, United States Senator from New York, when interviewed in Washington, D. C., advised he is not acquainted with Miss Dunham and could furnish no information concerning her.

[redacted] Dunham School, New York City, advised she has been affiliated with Miss Dunham for the past five years. She mentioned that Miss Dunham and her troupe of dancers are presently touring Africa and they anticipate returning to the United States in March, 1967. She mentioned that Miss Dunham originally entered the theatrical

Katherine Dunham

profession in 1933 in Chicago, Illinois, and since that time Miss Dunham has been active in more than fifty different stage plays, theater performances, and motion pictures.

[redacted] stated that Miss Dunham is known as an outstanding choreographer and she has been responsible for the choreography in more than two dozen various plays within the United States and abroad. She stated there is no question concerning Miss Dunham's character, reputation, loyalty, habits, morals, and integrity. She said Miss Dunham is entirely trustworthy and dependable and she highly recommended her for a position of trust and responsibility with the Federal Government.

[redacted] Hurak Attractions, Incorporated, Los Angeles, California, advised she has been acquainted with Miss Dunham since 1941. She said she regards Miss Dunham as one of her best friends. They originally became acquainted in Los Angeles, California, on a social basis; however, from 1944 until 1947 she traveled with Miss Dunham and was engaged as Miss Dunham's company manager and assistant stage manager. She stated in 1962 she was associated with Miss Dunham in New York City in connection with a stage production. [redacted] mentioned she is also acquainted with Miss Dunham's husband,

[redacted] and she considers him a very thoughtful and responsible person whose character, reputation, and loyalty are above question. She mentioned that [redacted] had been employed by Miss Dunham prior to their marriage and he traveled with Miss Dunham's dance troupe as the troupe's designer. [redacted] stated she has always admired Miss Dunham as a person and as an artist. She commented favorably concerning Miss Dunham's character, reputation, loyalty, and associates.

[redacted] mentioned that on many occasions while touring in foreign countries Miss Dunham has had opportunities to criticize the treatment of the Negro in American society; however, she always refused to do so pointing out that the opportunities available to minority groups and individuals in the United States are unlimited. [redacted] also mentioned that Miss Dunham has an adopted daughter [redacted] This daughter is presently appearing in a theatrical production in Paris, France. She said she has a high regard for Miss Dunham's daughter. [redacted] highly recommended Miss Dunham for a position of trust with the United States Government.

Katherine Dunham

[redacted] in New York City, advised that she has been acquainted with Miss Dunham since 1929. She stated they attended the University of Chicago at the same time. She said she was also acquainted with Miss Dunham's brother, Albert, as well as her parents, all of whom are deceased. Mrs. Wolf stated she is also acquainted with Miss Dunham's husband [redacted] and she has a high regard for him. She stated over the years, in an unprofessional way she has assisted Miss Dunham in connection with the management of her troupe. She said she knows Miss Dunham is held in high regard by her associates in the theatrical business and she considers Miss Dunham a pathfinder in helping Negroes establish themselves in the theater. She said she has been given no reason to question Miss Dunham's character, reputation, loyalty, or associates and she highly recommended Miss Dunham for a position of trust and confidence.

[redacted] who has been active in the arts in New York City, for many years, advised she has been acquainted with Miss Dunham since 1945. She is also acquainted with Miss Dunham's husband, [redacted] as well as her daughter [redacted]. She furnished favorable comments regarding the character, reputation, loyalty, morals, habits, and associates of Miss Dunham and her close relatives. She stated Miss Dunham is a well-educated person who over the years has demonstrated she is a good organizer and effective writer. She stated further Miss Dunham is known in the theatrical world as a talented dancer and choreographer. She highly recommended Miss Dunham for a position of trust and responsibility with the Federal Government.

Twenty-one additional persons, including social acquaintances and professional associates, were interviewed, and they furnished favorable comments regarding Miss Dunham's character, reputation, loyalty, morals, habits, and associates. Those well acquainted with Miss Dunham stated she is an intelligent individual, a good organizer, and effective writer, and she is known in the theatrical world as an outstanding dancer and choreographer. She was recommended for a position of trust and confidence. Persons acquainted with Miss Dunham's close relatives stated they are reputable individuals and their loyalty to the United States is above question.

Katherine Dunham

Close Relatives

Father	Albert Milland Dunham Deceased
Mother	Annette Poindexter Dunham Deceased
Daughter	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 250px; height: 1.2em; display: inline-block;"></div> currently appearing in a theatrical production in Paris, France
Brother	Albert Dunham Deceased

Credit and Arrest Checks

Information has been received from the appropriate credit reporting and law enforcement agencies in the United States and Mexico indicating that their files contain no information concerning Miss Dunham or her close relatives.

Miscellaneous

Informants who have furnished reliable information in the past have advised that during the 1940s and early 1950s Miss Dunham and members of her dance troupe participated in fund-raising programs which were sponsored by such organizations as the American Youth for Democracy; Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee; National Council of American-Soviet Friendship; California Labor School, Incorporated; National Negro Congress; Philadelphia School of Social Science and Art; and the Civil Rights Congress.

American Youth for Democracy; Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee; National Council of American-Soviet Friendship; California Labor School, Incorporated; National Negro Congress; Philadelphia School of Social Science and Art; and the Civil Rights Congress have been designated pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

Katherine Dunham

b3
b6
b7C

The aforementioned informants also advised that Katherine Dunham was listed as a sponsor in the 1940s of such organizations as the Committee for Equal Justice for [redacted] Southern Conference for Human Welfare; and the Citizens Non-Partisan Committee to Elect Benjamin J. Davis to the New York City Council.

The Committee for Equal Justice for [redacted] Southern Conference for Human Welfare; and the Citizens Non-Partisan Committee to Elect Benjamin J. Davis to the New York City Council have been cited as communist front organizations by the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

According to the aforementioned informants Miss Dunham was not an active participant in any of the organizations mentioned hereinbefore and they have no knowledge that she at any time was sympathetic toward communism. She was, however, desirous of advancing the rights of the Negroes.

Agency Checks

[redacted]

Information has been received from the following governmental agencies indicating that their files contain either no record or no additional pertinent information regarding Miss Dunham:

Bureau of Personnel Investigations, Civil Service Commission; House Committee on Un-American Activities; United States Secret Service; Naval Investigative Service, Office of Naval Intelligence; Defense Central Index of Investigations, Fort Holabird, Maryland; and the White House Office.

Katherine Dunham

The central files of the FBI, including the files of the Identification Division, contain no additional pertinent information regarding Miss Dunham.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

REPORTING OFFICE CHICAGO	OFFICE OF ORIGIN BUREAU	DATE 2/18/67	INVESTIGATIVE PERIOD 2/16 - 17/67
TITLE OF CASE KATHERINE DUNHAM, aka.		REPORT MADE BY SA 	TYPED BY flk
		CHARACTER OF CASE SPI	

b6
b7C

REFERENCE: Washington Field teletype to Chicago dated 2/15/67.

- RUC -

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/00 BY SP-4 bja/tmg

- A* -
COVER PAGE

Case has been: Pending over one year ☐ Yes ☐ No; Pending prosecution over six months ☐ Yes ☐ No

APPROVED <u>mwb</u> <u>lcs</u>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACES BELOW
COPIES MADE: ① - Bureau (AM) 1 - Chicago (161-1413) FEB 20 1967		<u>161-4870-35</u> NOT RECORDED 18 FEB 20 1967 <u>SP-4</u>
Dissemination Record of Attached Report		Notations
Agency	<u>30</u>	
Request Recd.		
Date Fwd.		
How Fwd.	61 MAR 27 1967	
By		

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Copy to:

Report of:

SA [REDACTED]

Office: Chicago

b6
b7C

Date:

2/18/67

Field Office File #: 161-1413

Bureau File #:

Title:

KATHERINE DUNHAM

Character:

SPECIAL INQUIRY

Synopsis:

Marriage and divorce verified. Employment by Chicago Public Library verified. Appointee's former husband comments favorably. Credit and arrest checks negative.

- RUC -

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/1/00 BY SP4 bja/Heg

CG 161-1413

b6
b7C
b7D

DETAILS:

Marriage

On February 16, 1967, IC [redacted] checked the records of the Bureau of Vital Statistics, Cook County, Illinois, at Chicago, Illinois, and located a marriage license number 1277303 filed on June 2, 1930, which reflects that [redacted] married Miss KATHERINE M. DUNHAM on May 29, 1930. This was the first marriage for each of these partners.

Divorce

On February 17, 1967, IC [redacted] checked the records of the Superior Court of Cook County, Illinois, Chicago, Illinois. Docket number 39 S 1165 reflects that [redacted] filed a complaint for divorce on February 2, 1939, against K. D. MC COO, [redacted]. The complaint reflects they were married May 29, 1930, at Chicago, and she left him on August 1, 1937. A decree for divorce was entered May 3, 1939, by Judge RUDOLPH F. DESORT.

Miscellaneous

On February 17, 1967, [redacted] [redacted] advised that he met the appointee about 1928 or 1929 and they were married in May of 1930. He said she was a University of Chicago student and an employee of the Chicago Public Library during their marriage. He stated her career in dancing was getting underway in the 1930's and she did have some performances at the Chicago Civic Opera during the World's Fair and was also in the Ballet L'Ag'Ya for a period. [redacted] said they had a very pleasant and happy marriage until they had disagreements and mutually consented to separation in an adult manner. He stated the divorce did not involve any scandal or notoriety. He stated he has not seen her for about

CG 161-1413

b6
b7C
b7D

25 years but did meet several times after 1937 in a congenial atmosphere at her mother's residence in Joliet, Illinois.

[redacted] said he regarded the appointee as a loyal American citizen of good character, reputation and morals. He stated he knew nothing of an adverse nature concerning her. He said he knows of no one in the Chicago area that knows her.

Employment.

Chicago Public Library
Chicago, Illinois

On February 17, 1967, [redacted] advised KATHERINE DUNHAM was hired June 26, 1928, under Civil Service as a junior library clerk. She changed her name to KATHERINE MC COO on June 11, 1930, and terminated as of October 16, 1933. [redacted] said the appointee was actually employed only during the following periods:

June 26, 1928 - December 26, 1928
August 26, 1929 - October 1, 1930
February 2, 1931 - June 19, 1933

[redacted] stated she personally recalls the appointee as a satisfactory employee whose loyalty and moral character she had no reason to question.

She said she knows of no one else employed by the library who would have known the appointee.

Credit and Arrest

On February 17, 1967, [redacted] Chicago Credit Bureau, Incorporated, and personnel of the Chicago Police Department, Bureau of Records and Communications, advised IC [redacted] that they have no record of the appointee as MC COO or her former husband [redacted]

FBI WASH DC

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

FEB 21 1967

TELETYPE

Mr. Tolson _____
Mr. DeLoach _____
Mr. Mohr _____
Mr. Wick _____
Mr. Casper _____
Mr. Callahan _____
Mr. Conrad _____
Mr. Felt _____
Mr. Gale _____
Mr. Rosen _____
Mr. Sullivan _____
Mr. Tavel _____
Mr. Trotter _____
Tele. Room _____
Miss Holmes _____
Miss Gandy _____

FBI DETROIT

1231PM URGENT 2-21-67 JRM

TO DIRECTOR

FROM DETROIT (161-673) (RUC) 1P

KATHERINE DUNHAM, AKA. KAY DUNN, KATHERINE PRATT, MRS. JOHN THOMAS CLEVELAND
PRATT, KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT, KATHERINE DUNHAM MC COO, MRS.
JARDIS MC COO; SPI; BUDED: PAST.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/1/00 BY SP-4 BPC/ryj

MR. CLEVELAND
ROOM 1246

RE WASHINGTON FIELD TELETYPE TO CHICAGO DATED FEBRUARY
FIFTEEN, LAST; AND DETROIT REPORT OF SA [REDACTED]
DATED FEBRUARY ONE, LAST.

b6
b7C
b7D

THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES ON FEBRUARY TWENTY, LAST, ADVISED
IC [REDACTED] THAT THEIR FILES CONTAINED NO DEROGATORY
CREDIT INFORMATION OR RECORD OF ARREST IDENTIFIABLE WITH KAY DUNN
KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT, KATHERINE DUNHAM MC COO, OR MRS. JARDIS
MC COO.

[REDACTED] CREDIT
DATA CORPORATION, DETROIT MICH., [REDACTED]
MERCHANTS CREDIT BUREAU, DETROIT; [REDACTED]
BUREAU OF IDENTIFICATION, DETROIT PD; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] TRAFFIC COURT, DETROIT; AND [REDACTED]
WAYNE COUNTY SO, DETROIT.

END.

RAM

FBI WASH DC

NOT RECORDED

25 MAR 13 1967

161-4870-36

61 MAR 27 1967

F B I

Date: 2/24/67

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL _____
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI
FROM: SAC, WFO (161-4100) (P)
KATHERINE DUNHAM, aka
SPI

ReWFOteletype to Chicago, dated 2/15/67.

To date the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has been unable to locate any income tax data concerning appointee. IRS interested in knowing date appointee plans to return to this country so she can be interviewed by IRS. Bureau please advise date of return if known.

as a part of this airtel

Attached are results of agency checks at the State Department, Security Office, the Personnel Locator files, and the State Department Division of Americans Abroad, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Documents pertaining to the appointee from the Division of Americans Abroad are also attached hereto, some of which are classified "Confidential, Group 4" and, therefore, the attachments are being so classified. Also attached are the results of the State Department passport check.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/00 BY SP4 byt/kyg

① Bureau
1- WFO

JER:eec
(2)

AIRTEL

Approved: 61 MAR 27 1967
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

161-4870-37
NOT RECORDED

25 MAR 13 1967

ENCLOSURE

WFO 161-4100

LEAD

WASHINGTON FIELD

AT WASHINGTON, D.C.

Will maintain liaison with IRS concerning
income tax check.

Appointee's file at the Passport Office, Department of State, part of which was made available for review on 2/15/67 and the completed file on 2/21/67, was reviewed by IC [REDACTED] It indicated appointee was born 6/22/1912, at Chicago, Illinois.

On 4/7/1947 appointee was issued New York Series Passport #1796 in the name of KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT for proposed travel of three months' duration to Mexico for "prof. engagement." On the passport application, which was dated 4/4/1947 at New York City, she listed permanent residence as 57 Park Avenue, New York, New York. It indicated that she was last married on 7/10/1941 [REDACTED] She stated that she was previously married [REDACTED] on 6/12/1933 at Chicago, Illinois, and that this marriage was terminated by divorce on 2/3/36.

The passport files reflect that KATHERINE DUNHAM MC COO, known as KATHERINE DUNHAM, was first issued passport #207877 at Washington, D.C., on June 8, 1935, for proposed travel to the British Isles for six months for the purpose of travel. She stated she was born 6/22/1909 at Chicago, Illinois. The file does not indicate that a birth certificate was seen by passport authorities but the Passport Office then accepted this birth information from her inasmuch as her father, ALBERT M. DUNHAM, then residing at 408 S. Joliet Street, Joliet, Illinois, served as her identifying witness, stating he had known her for twenty-five years. Her permanent residence then was Vincennes Avenue, Chicago. She stated that she was married on 5/29/1930 [REDACTED] and then residing at 3638 S. Parkway, Chicago.

By letter dated 2/7/1943 from 20 Romolo Place, San Francisco, she requested the return of her passport which had been taken up at the Canadian border on 6/5/1942. The file shows that her 1935 passport was cancelled and returned to her on 3/16/1943.

On 4/1/1949 at the American Embassy, Rome, Italy, she had passport #1796 renewed (to be valid until 4/1/1951). On the renewal application, she listed her legal residence as 220 West 43rd Street, New York, New York.

On 7/20/1951 at Port au Prince, Haiti, she was issued passport #180 for travel to all countries not under restrictions. She listed her legal residence as 220 West 43rd Street, New York City. The passport was issued in the name of KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT, aka, KATHERINE DUNHAM. On 10/9/1953 at the American Consular Service, Habana, Cuba, she had passport #180 renewed for two years (to expire 7/20/1955). Her renewal application indicated she represented the KATHERINE DUNHAM THEATER PRODUCTIONS, Inc., 220 W. 43rd Street, New York.

On 8/11/1955, appointee was issued passport #2132 at Mexico, D.F., in the name of KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT for travel to Mexico and Cuba for "professional purposes." The passport application showed she was residing at Cerrada de la Amargura 22, San Angel Inn, Mexico, D.F. Mexico. She indicated that she was last married on 7/11/1950 [redacted]. She requested that her mother, Mrs. ANNETTE DUNHAM, 112 S. Joliet Street, Joliet, Illinois, be notified in the event of death or accident.

On 8/3/1964, appointee was issued passport #E-574315 in the name of KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT, aka, KATHERINE DUNHAM for proposed travel of six weeks' duration to Italy, France and England on business. The passport application reflected she was previously issued passport #250452 issued 8/20/1959 and which was renewed on February, 1962. The 1964 passport application was supported by a supplementary affidavit dated 7/31/1964, at New York, New York, regarding change of name which was furnished [redacted] in which he stated that he had known KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT, aka, KATHERINE DUNHAM, residing at Hotel Chelsea, 222 W. 23rd Street, New York City, New York, since 1941. Another affidavit dated 7/31/64, at New York, New York, [redacted] indicated she had known KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT, aka, KATHERINE DUNHAM, residing at the Hotel Chelsea, 23rd Street, New York City, New York, for ten years and that the appointee assumed the names by marriage on or about 1941.

On her 1964 passport application, appointee indicated that she was last married on 7/10/1941 [redacted]. She listed her parents as ALBERT MILLARD DUNHAM, born 3/27/1887 at Memphis, Tennessee, and ANNETTE POINDEXTER, born 2/17/1888 at Alton, Illinois.

*WFO
WPS*
KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT was issued Passport # 250452 at Paris, France, on 8/20/1959 for proposed travel in France and other countries on personal business. She stated she had been in Mexico from August, 1947, to December, 1947, and had had numerous trips abroad from 1948 to July, 1959, and had been in France since July, 1959.

She gave as her legal residence 608 5th Avenue, New York City, New York, and was then residing at the Hotel Roblin in Paris.

She stated she was last married 7/10/1941 at Tecata, Mexico, to [redacted] an American citizen, then residing in Paris.

WFO 161-4100

3

b6
b7C

Appearing in the passport file was the following telegram from Milan to the Department of State, dated October 17, 1952;

Subject: Non-Attendance at a Reception for the American Dancer, KATHERINE DUNHAM.

This office received a number of invitations for a reception given by the Casa della Cultura (House of Culture) for the American dancer, KATHERINE DUNHAM, on October 11, 1952. None of the officers or employees attended the reception, and as the question might arise, it is thought advisable to inform the Department of the reason for non-attendance.

The Casa della Cultura appears to be either a Communist, or Communist dominated, organization disguised as a "house of culture." Members of the committee are, with two exceptions, considered either as Communists or Nenni-Socialists (the latter belong to the PSI, an Italian Socialist party cooperating with the Communists). These individuals are:

[redacted] PSI
Members: [redacted]
[redacted] Provincial Peace Partisans
(Communist)
[redacted] (Communist)
[redacted] a poet (Communist)
[redacted] (Communist)
[redacted] (PSI)
[redacted] (PSI)
[redacted] (PSI)
[redacted] (Politics unknown,
probably PST)

WFO 161-4100

4

b6
b7c

[REDACTED] are said to be either editors or writers of "AVANTI," the PSI newspaper.

The invitations gave no indications of the political character of the committee sponsoring the Casa della Cultura but the inference is that it is a Communist front organization disguised as a cultural organization.

It is not known if Miss DUNHAM knew the political character of the Casa della Cultura.

A communication dated August 15, 1955, from the American Embassy, Mexico, D. F., disclosed that KATHERINE DUNHAM PRATT applied for a new passport on August 8, 1955, at the above Embassy. As the result of the usual security made on each applicant, it was indicated in the Mexican newspaper "Popular" dated August 10, 1949, that among those listed as having signed the Convocation of the Peace Congress (Stockholm Appeal), appeared the name of KATHERINE DUNHAM (PRATT), dancer.

Inasmuch as Mrs. PRATT was issued passport number 180/FS 267083 on July 20, 1951, at Port-au-Prince, Haiti, it is assumed that her alleged signing has been explained to the Department's satisfaction, and she, therefore, was not questioned concerning the matter.

Passport number 2132/F3 122012 was issued to her by this Embassy on August 11, 1955, to facilitate her travel to Cuba, after a brief visit to Los Angeles, California.

The files of the Passport Office contained no additional pertinent information.

WFO 161-4100

5

b6
b7C
b7D

The files of the Office of Security, Department of State, were caused to be searched by SA [REDACTED] and it was determined on February 17, 1967, that they contained no additional pertinent information concerning the appointee.

[REDACTED] Personnel Locator, Employee Services Center, Department of State, and [REDACTED] Personnel Files, Record Services Division, Department of State, advised SA [REDACTED] on February 15, 1967, that they could locate no record indicating that the appointee had ever been an employee of the Department of State.

On February 15, 1967, [REDACTED] Division of Americans Abroad, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State, advised SA [REDACTED] on February 16, 1967, that the records of her office reflected that the appointee, KATHERINE DJNHAM, was awarded a grant on July 9, 1965, under the provisions of Public Law 87-256 (The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, approved on September 21, 1961), as an American Specialist in the Field of Dance, to go to Dakar, Senegal, for a total period of 189 days from November 15, 1965, to May 15, 1966. [REDACTED] stated, however, that her office had experienced considerable difficulty with the appointee in connection with her grant, and she actually went to Dakar on December 16, 1965, returning to Paris, France, on December 21, 1965. She stayed in Paris from that date until March 4, 1966, when she returned to Dakar. Her grant terminated on August 30, 1966. [REDACTED] commented that her office had had "no end of trouble with her" regarding travel arrangements, salary, per diem, requests to be allowed expenses for excess baggage, and many other matters. She indicated that after the trouble experienced by her office in connection with the appointee's grant, it is doubtful if she would

WFO 161-4100

6

again be recommended by her office for a similar grant in the future, although she emphasized that this would be a decision which would not be her's [redacted] to make.

[redacted] advised that she had checked in other areas of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs to ascertain if the appointee might have received any other grants from the State Department. She reported that she could locate nothing regarding any additional grants made to the appointee. [redacted] recommended that the American Specialist file on the appointee, maintained in her office, gave a better overall picture of the difficulties experienced by the Department of State in connection with appointee's grant and any personal recollection she might have.

b6
b7C
b7D

The American Specialist file for the appointee, maintained in the Division of Americans Abroad, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State, contained copies of the attached documents which have been furnished to the FBI by the Division of Americans Abroad, and may be retained by the FBI. These documents, some of which are classified "Confidential" set forth the background information concerning appointee's grant, and contained details regarding difficulties experienced by the Department of State in connection with the grant. Some of these documents are classified "Confidential, Group 4," and are attached hereto.

ORIGIN/ ACTION

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

Original to be filed in CU Decentralized Files.

FILE DESIGNATION

RM/R	REP	AF
1		5
ARA	EUR	FE
NEA	CU	INR
E	P	IO
	1	
L	FBO	AID
	614	
	1	
AGR	COM	FRB
INT	LAB	TAR
TR	XMB	AIR
ARMY	CIA	NAVY
OSD	USIA	NSA
	10	

A-30

UNCLASSIFIED

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : AmEmbassy DAKAR

FROM : Department of State, CU/ECS/AA

DATE: May 19 3 29 PM '66

SUBJECT: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE: Katherine DUNHAM, American Specialist

REF : Dakar A-369

- The Department awarded an American Specialist grant to Miss Katherine Dunham for a period of 189 days with the provision that she enter on duty in Dakar on November 13, 1965 and complete her grant period on May 17, 1966. According to the grant she was supposed to be in duty status in Dakar for 183 days. An additional four days were provided for travel to and from Dakar and 2 days for briefing and debriefing, making a total of 189 days.

According to information available to the Department, Miss Dunham was on duty in Dakar for six days from December 16 to 21, 1965 and returned for duty on March 4, 1966. Consequently, under the provisions of the grant, Miss Dunham's duty status in Dakar will be terminated on August 30, 1966, allowing 2 days for travel to her home and one day for debriefing.

Up to the present time the following compensation payments have been made to Miss Dunham:

July 30 briefing and compensation from 11/13-20	\$297.00 9 days
Compensation from 11/21 - 12/4	462.00 14 days
Compensation from 12/5 - 12/18	462.00 14 days
Compensation from 3/4 - 4/9, 1966	1221.00 37 days
Compensation from 4/10 - 4/20	462.00 14 days

Total 2904.00 88 days

FOR DEPT. USE ONLY

☐ In ☒ Out

FORM 4-63 DS-323

UNCLASSIFIED

Drafted by: CU/ECS/AA: BZemplenyi/Am 5/18/66

Drafting Date: 5/18/66

Contents and Classification Approved by:

Clearances:

CU/AF :

161-4870-37
ENCLOSURE

UNCLASSIFIED

2

compensation payments from November 13 to December 18 were made on the assumption that Miss Dunham entered on duty November 13, 1965 as provided for in her grant.

During the period from November 13 to December 18 Miss Dunham received compensation for 37 days when she was on duty for 6 days only. This overpayment for 31 days will be adjusted before the termination of her grant.

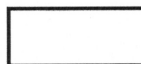
Miss Dunham will continue to receive compensation for a total of 189 days, provided that she remains on duty in Dakar for the entire period of her grant.

2. Miss Dunham was awarded an American Specialist grant for the specific purpose of remaining in Dakar for a period of six months and to carry out her mission there in cooperation with the Embassy. Miss Dunham accepted the terms of the grant and signed the letter accompanying the grant.

Miss Dunham's departure from Dakar to Paris after being on duty for six days was not authorized by the Department and was not suggested by the Embassy. Since Miss Dunham did not perform any authorized duties in Paris under the provisions of her grant, the Department can not accede to her request for the payment of compensation or per diem during her stay in Paris.

Concerning Miss Dunham's insurance claims, the Department is in no position to make any decision. Since Miss Dunham was covered by insurance provided by the Department, she should establish her claim with the insurance company. It will be up to the insurance company to determine whether her medical and hospital expenses were due to her accident in Dakar or due to her chronic arthritic condition.

3. The Department can not consider extending Miss Dunham's grant beyond the termination date on August 30, 1966.



b6
b7C

UNCLASSIFIED

July 30, 1963

b6
b7C

MEMORANDUM FOR: CU/RCS [redacted]
FROM: [redacted]
SUBJECT: Katherine Dunham

Yesterday, Katherine Dunham came in to see me -- an appointment arranged by [redacted]. She has been in several times in the past to discuss a possible tour under the Cultural Presentations Program. She has apparently, for some years, been led to expect she would be sent out under this Program but has never actually had an offer. We are still unable to make her an offer as the Panel did not select her. I have explained this to her including a detailed description of the selection process. I talked with her about the possibility of taking a Specialist's tour for me. She is interested in the idea but has not agreed to do so. She is going to Africa next week as the guest of three governments (Senegal, Nigeria, and I have forgotten the third) to advise them on their World's Fair Exhibits. On her return, she is doing Aida with the Metropolitan and will be available about the 15th of October and, at that point, might be interested in a tour for me. I told her we would have to find a suitable area. She knows the world very well and has toured very widely in almost every major capital. She thinks that for lectures the Far East would probably be best and most receptive to lecture techniques.

Another possibility she mentioned was Latin America with emphasis on the smaller cities.

Miss Dunham is to be in touch with me after her return from Africa. I think she would be a superb lecturer in a number of areas. You might care to be thinking about this.

cc: CU/FE
CU/ARA
CU/CP

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/02 BY SP4bjc/tcg

CU:LEBattb:eff

161-4870-37
ENCLOSURE

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : CU/CP - [REDACTED]

DATE: February 11, 1964

FROM : CU/ECS:AA - [REDACTED]

b6
b7C

SUBJECT: Request for evaluation by Dance Panel.

Name: Katherine Dunham, dancer, choreographer.

Proposal: Miss Dunham has come to the Department on a number of occasions to discuss the possibility of taking a company of dancers abroad for the Department of State. For a number of reasons such a tour is not possible, but the possibility has been discussed of sending Miss Dunham out alone as an American Specialist to lecture on dance in the United States.

We do not know that she is seriously interested in going out without her company, but before approaching her to ascertain the extent of her interest, we wish to ask the panel members this question:

In your opinion is it desirable to send Katherine Dunham abroad as a lecturer on American dance? If so, any suggestions which you may have concerning areas of the world in which she would be most effective and ways in which she could be programmed would be appreciated. Our tentative thought has been that she might be sent to the Far East or to Latin America.

Biographic Information:

Born 1910, Chicago.
Graduate, University of Chicago.
Studied dance in Chicago; did research in the dances of the West Indies, '36-'37.
Producer-Director, Katherine Dunham Dance Company.
Has made various tours of the United States and Europe with her company under such names as Bal Negre, Tropical Revue, New Tropical Revue, etc.
Established Katherine Dunham School of Cultural Arts, New York, '45.
Has contributed articles to magazines under the pseudonym of K. Dunn; author of books on the dance.
Address: 57 Park Avenue, New York City.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/1/00 BY SP4bjc/Hcg

161-4870-37

ENCLOSURE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: February 12, 1964

SUBJECT: Katherine Dunham for Specialists

PARTICIPANTS:

[redacted] CU/CP
[redacted] Dance Panel members listed below

b6
b7C

COPIES TO:

[redacted]
American Specialists

Dance

[redacted] called to ask me to call/Panel members regarding the following information: "In your opinion is it desirable to send Katherine Dunham abroad as a lecturer on American dance? If so, any suggestions you may have concerning areas of the world in which she would be most effective and ways she could be programmed would be appreciated. Our tentative thought has been that she might be sent to the Far East or Latin America."

[redacted] No, it is not desirable. She is not representative of American dance, but a specialized (Caribbean) aspect of it. "She's trouble - do you want another [redacted] She does not pay her own people, and is only interested in feathering her own nest; she loves money, and just wants a grant. She is unprincipled, and caused a hassle in Australia which got in all the newspapers, when she was there on her own. She loses her temper, and "you couldn't police her at all." If a Negro dance specialist is wanted, [redacted] would recommend [redacted] or Pearl Primus, both of whom are highly qualified as specialists and "have brains." For the record, [redacted] would object to Miss Dunham on the grounds of being "too specialized and having the wrong personality to represent us abroad."

[redacted] In principle, it sounds like a marvelous idea, but [redacted] has heard several stories about how difficult she is to get along with, and to handle, and would have to check these out before giving

before giving a final opinion.

[] He has not seen Katherine Dunham for quite a number of years. As he remembers her work a long time ago she was an intellectual, very charming, and would be capable of doing a very good lecture because of her training and education in the specialized area of ethnic dance and folklore of the West Indies. She has a good deal of temperament which has caused problems in her professional life, but might not exist if she was alone. Because of her interest in the ethnic life in the West Indies, she would be a natural for South America. She is shrewd theatrically, all style, looks and charm, which was based on her physical attractiveness; she is not a technician. He would hope that unless there is a specific request for her in a special place, that this could be considered when all the Panel members were present at the March 19 meeting, since he does not know her personally.

[] Although [] does not know her personally, but only as a performer, she would go along with the idea. She is a graduate anthropologist from the University of Chicago, very bright and attractive. [] imagines she has knowledge of several languages since she has been abroad so many times. She would hope that she would not take a production as her productions of late have been of the nightclub type. Her charm as a performer and her knowledge of ethnic forms and anthropology are what she would base her approval on.

[] Thinks it might be a good idea because she speaks very well, however, her subject should not be American dance, but what she is best qualified to speak on - The contribution of the Negro to the dance in the New World (the Americas, North and South). Only 1/10 of her programs are U.S.; the rest is Brazilian and Caribbean, etc. She is a difficult woman and has had problems with her own dancers, but if she could be held to lecturing, it might be all right, with reservations regarding her qualifications to represent to the fullest the art of the dance in America (since she is a very specialized specialist) and with certain personality reservations. Upon reflection, [] added that the subject he named might serve to pinpoint that the Negro is different in America, and the Department might not want to show that aspect.

Katherine Dunham (continued)

P. 3

[] (2/14/64)

It is an ideal thing; she is educated, has done research, is presentable and has had wide experience. She was at a symposium at the Manhattan School of Music some years ago where she gave a lecture with illustrated material, slides, etc. which was very good. She has a strong personality, but if kept in the framework of a lecture, it can be channeled.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

TO : FILES

DATE: February 19, 1964

FROM :

[REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Katherine Dunham

b6
b7C
b7D

On February 6th [REDACTED] said that he thought Katherine Dunham would be an excellent lecturer, a good representative of this country. He is not sure she would want to go out without her troupe but she would be pleased to be invited. She is a bit annoyed with the indifference of the Department but she is a charming person, very cultivated and talks well.

[REDACTED] seem to agree that Miss Dunham would be a good representative.

On February 10th [REDACTED] said that Miss Dunham's team had been turned down for the Cultural Presentations Program because it was too erotic, but he did not want to tell her that this was the reason. We discussed the possibility of her going alone as a lecturer. He says he thinks she's a bit too fat for a lecture demonstration now and would do us little good. He said that [REDACTED] had suggested to her when she was in his office that she might go out alone as an American Specialist but that she did not take him up, and he, [REDACTED] thinks we ought not to renew the suggestion.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

161-4870-37
ENCLOSURE

8 MAR 1964

Dear Miss Dunham:

Since I received your January letter, I have made rather extensive investigations to see if we could not, in some way, utilize your talents or those of your company at the Berlin Festival and in other parts of Europe. You have shown such great interest in our educational and cultural exchange program and I have such admiration for you as a person, that I have been particularly hopeful we could work out something which would be interesting for you and which would also fit into our broader program plans. I am sorry to report that I have not been successful.

As I have already explained to you, it is necessary that our programs for performing artists fit broad objectives laid down for each area of the world, that they be approved by non-governmental panels and that they be planned many months ahead. If in any case, however deserving, we ignore our usual procedures, we invite a great deal of trouble from other artists, from the public and from Congress. I have to assure Congress that the program is always governed by decisions, made months in advance, by a panel of experts, not by my own fiat.

In order to see whether we might be able to suggest that you go alone as a lecturer and consultant, we have canvassed requests from our posts overseas and reviewed objectives for our program of lecturers, but unfortunately lectures on the dance do not receive a high enough priority listing to enable us to include such a tour at the present time as part of our small program.

In any case, you have indicated that you would much prefer to travel with your troupe and I am not sure that we could have enticed you to go out alone.

I am sorry to have to write a discouraging answer to a person who is so much interested in international cultural exchange and who has so often performed abroad with great success, but I am sure you will understand some of the limitations, fiscal and otherwise, under which we have to work.

It is always a pleasure to see you.

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

Miss Katherine Dunham
Hotel Chelsea
New York, New York

161-4870-37
ENCLOSURE

C
O
P
Y

January 18th 1965
University Courts Apt. N.
Carbondale, Illinois
U.S.A.

Ambassador Mercer Cook
Ambassador of the United States
DAKAR, Senegal.

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

May I offer late congratulations on your new post. I assume that it will be a most rewarding one, particularly in view of the World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar. During the past one and a half years I have been in constant and close contact with the Senegalese government, hoping to be able to contribute both to the overall plan and the Performing Arts Program.

It has not been possible for me to spend a great deal of time in meetings in New York, but I have been able to be of some service I believe in Italy, Sweden and Paris. Upon returning to New York I found a greatly expanded American Committee, including a number of people who will I hope insure the success of the American participation.

Unfortunately the budget for the performing arts does not allow for any one company to present a full evening or it seems even a major work of any length. Since our company has made such an impact upon other countries of the world, I feel that it would be a great loss if we were not fully represented to best advantage at the Festival. I have therefore suggested to Ambassador Alioune Diop and to His Excellency President Senghor that they solicit our presence through the State Department.

I believe that we once spoke about the fact that our company has never benefited in subsidy for any of our touring and this as you can imagine, has been a great blow economically on keeping solvent. I no longer try to subsidize the full company between tours but have reestablished a School in New York, making use of some of the members as instructors. We have available on a short rehearsal notice the full repertoire and company which has meant so much to both sophisticated and emerging countries the world over.

It would now seem time for us to receive subsidy for a tour no matter how brief, and surely there could be no better occasion than at the Festival. From experience in South America, the Far East and even this country, I am sure that the process and technique which we have used to translate primitive, folk and international material into a creative theatre, is one which would greatly benefit the African countries where we have not been able to finance a tour independently.

15
161-4870-37
ENCLOSURE

C
O
P
Y

- 2 -

I would also like at the same time to suggest State Department or private foundation subsidy for an exploratory trip of a few days, which I could make during the month of April, since I shall be in Paris at this time, and --- a period of instruction and guidance which I could offer to The National Academy Dance Department for a period before or after the Festival, and which I hope would become an annual project on my part.

I am at present in the campus of Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, in the capacity of Artist in Residence as you will see from the enclosed folder. My specific project is the staging of the Opera FAUST and the establishment of a dance department. I shall have finished for this year by the first of March and hope that by then some decision has been arrived at as to my participation with a full company.

My best regards and again, Ambassador, accept my congratulations.

b6
b7C

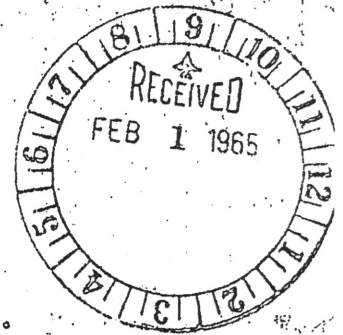
Yours sincerely,

Katherine Dunham.

16



THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

American Embassy,
Dakar, Senegal,
January 25, 1965.

Dear

On several recent occasions, Senghor has mentioned Catherine Dunham's eagerness to come to Senegal to teach dancing. It seems that she saw him in November - either in Paris or New York - and said that she wanted to open a dance school in St. Louis du Sénégal. He has assured her, however, that she could do a much more valuable job in Dakar at the School for African Arts.

b6
b7C

Last Saturday the President again broached this matter and asked whether AID could pay Miss Dunham's travel expenses and salary. The Senegalese Government could provide living quarters. At any rate he would be writing me about it.

In this connection, our PAO has probably relayed our impression that the University of Dakar seems unlikely to invite a visiting American professor for the next academic year. The Rector was most evasive when we raised this question with him a couple of weeks ago. Senghor also complains that it is almost impossible to get a visiting professor from any country but France into the University.

Perhaps the School for African Arts is a suitable alternative. Would there be a possibility of Foundation support? I shall, of course, forward Senghor's letter as soon as it arrives.

Sincerely,

Mercer Cook

Mercer Cook

African Programs,
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

ENCLOSURE

161-4870-37

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : [REDACTED] CU/ECS/AA

DATE: May 4, 1965

FROM : [REDACTED] CU/CP *B.J.*

b6
b7C

SUBJECT: Katherine Dunham for a specialist grant

I have heard from eight out of fourteen Panel members who were sent my memo of April 29 on this subject. Although a few were not satisfied with the explanation of what she would teach - "what is the Katherine Dunham technique" was one of the questions raised - and some questioned the fact that she would be leaving the school to an unnamed assistant, there was general approval of the idea, considering that she was requested by the Senegalese President, and if the request is for a teacher, not as a choreographer for the Dakar Festival.

[REDACTED] suggested [REDACTED] if available, as her assistant, and would hope that President Sengor's oral invitation could be made official.

The fact that no Panel member has had first-hand knowledge of what Miss Dunham has been doing in the past ten years should be noted. (10)



1-8

161-4870-37
ENCLOSURE

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

ORIGIN/ACTION

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

FOR RM USE ONLY

RM/R REP AF

ARA EUR FE

NEA CU INR

E P IO

L FBO AID

AGR COM FRB

INT LAB TAR

TR XMB AIR

ARMY CIA NAVY

OSD USIA NSA

A-1387

UNCLASSIFIED

AIR PRIORITY

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FOR CU

Info. AMEMBASSY DAKAR

FROM : AMEMBASSY PARIS

SUBJECT : EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE: American Specialist Grantee
Katherine DUNHAM

REF : Wirom 3123

DATE: January 22, 1966

Miss Katherine DUNHAM now understands the terms of her travel authorization and is grateful for the clarification as well as for the excess baggage authorization, Paris-Dakar-US. She is still in Paris, having had an operation to remove some small bone particles which chipped off the kneecap as a result of a fall in a Dakar hotel. Presumably she will remain in a Paris clinic until about January 28, after which she still will have some recuperating to do in Paris.

She inquires about the possibility of her being accorded per diem allowance during some or all of her Paris stay, inasmuch as she says she is working on aspects of the April Festival of Negro Art. Among other things, she is working with the clothing designer [] on a scarf design. She is working on a fashion parade. She is working up some material for the literary group, Presence Africaine. Lastly, she is researching George Washington Carver to see if his life work of research on use of peanuts might not be converted into meaningful theatrical terms for use in Senegal, where peanuts are a major export. She wished to point out that she is in Paris at the recommendation of the American Ambassador and of President Senghor, who both felt she could be most effective right now working in Paris.

In the interim, Miss Dunham says she has received a message from President Senghor approving her appointment as "Technical Cultural Advisor" to the Senegalese Government. Upon questioning, she said this would entitle her to a villa during the festival, in which to do some necessary entertaining, but that no other emoluments were involved.

.../...

FORM 4-62 DS-323

UNCLASSIFIED

FOR DEPT. USE ONLY

☒ In ☐ Out

Drafted by:

sb/1/20/1966

Contents and Classification Approved by:

USIS: DGA/Ph

Clearances:

22

ENCLOSURE

161-4870-37

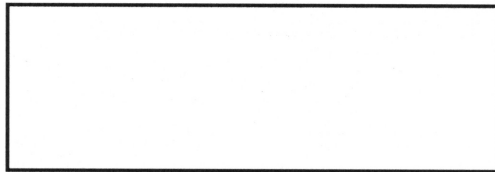
UNCLASSIFIED

Page 2 of 2
A-1387
from Paris

Presumably Miss Dunham is writing to the above effect in a personal letter to [redacted] of CU. The Embassy would be grateful for the Department's guidance in this matter.

FOR THE AMBASSADOR

b6
b7C



23

UNCLASSIFIED